

## Message Text

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67

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NEA-11

NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 TRSE-00 SAJ-01

USPS-02 SS-20 NSC-10 DODE-00 DRC-01 MC-02 ACDA-19

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FM USMISSION NATO

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INFO USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 0348

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SCUL, NATO, NL

SUBJECT: PROPOSED NATO STAMP

BEGIN SUMMARY. CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT AND LACK OF ALLIED SUPPORT  
BLAMED BY DUTCH NATO DELEGATION FOR CANCELLATION OF PLANS TO ISSUE  
NATO POSTAGE STAMP. END SUMMARY.

1. JANUARY 23 INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE FRONT PAGE HAS FOLLOWING  
AP DISPATCH FROM THE HAGUE: BEGIN TEXT. THE NETHERLANDS HAS CANCELED  
PLANS TO ISSUE A POSTAGE STAMP COMMEMORATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
NATO, POSTAL OFFICIALS SAID TODAY.

A STATEMENT SAID CANCELLATION OF THE STAMP "IS IN LINE WITH THE  
POLICY OF AVOIDING THE ISSUE OF POSTAGE STAMPS WHICH WOULD BE CON-  
SIDERED CONTROVERSIAL IN DUTCH SOCIETY."

THE STATEMENT SAID, HOWEVER, THAT "NO CONCLUSION CAN BE DRAWN"  
FROM THIS ACTION AS TO THE "LOYALTY OF THE PRESENT CABINET TO THE  
ATLANTIC ALLIANCE," AND POINTED OUT THAT OTHER NATO MEMBERS ARE  
LETTING THE ANNIVERSARY GO BY WITHOUT ISSUING SPECIAL POSTAGE STAMPS.  
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END TEXT.

2. DUTCH DELEGATION (MEIHUIZEN) SAYS IT INITIALLY PROPOSED  
ISSUANCE OF NATO STAMP TO DUTCH GOVERNMENT WITHIN

FRAMEWORK OF CICR SEARCH FOR APPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES TO CELEBRATE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF ALLIANCE. ACCORDING TO MEIHUIZEN, SCHMELTZER (THEN DUTCH FOREIGN MINISTER) APPROVED IDEA AND PRESENTED SUGGESTION TO COMPETENT MINISTRY (MINISTRY OF TRAFFIC, DIKES, ETC., AND UNTRANSLATABLE DUTCH PHRASE). RESPONSE WAS THAT USE OF STAMPS IN MAIL TRAFFIC WITH "CERTAIN COUNTRIES" (PRESUMABLY WP) COULD PRODUCE TROUBLE FOR SENDERS. ALLEGED DIFFICULTY WOULD BE THAT "NO DUTCH ARTIST WOULD BE WILLING TO DRAW STAMP". TRAFFIC MINISTER WAS WILLING TO DROP FIRST OBJECTION AND DUTCH DELEGATION PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF COMMON ALLIED DESIGN FOR STAMP TO CIRCUMVENT SECOND OBJECTION. DUTCH DELEGATION APPROACHED BELGIANS AND OTHER NATO DELEGATIONS. ALL WERE WILLING TO PARTICIPATE BUT NONE WERE WILLING TO TAKE THE LEAD. IN MAY 1973, DUTCH

PROPOSED THAT NATO INFORMATION SERVICE SPONSOR A CONTEST TO DEVELOP STAMP DESIGN. DUTCH FELT THIS PROPOSAL RECEIVED NO FAVORABLE ECHO FROM

ALLIES IN CICR AND DID NOT PROCEED WITH CONTEST IDEA.

3. CHANGE IN DUTCH GOVERNMENT PUT PPR MEMBER (RADICAL POLITICAL PARTY) INTO OFFICE AS STATE SECRETARY IN TRAFFIC MINISTRY. WITHIN NEW FIVE-PARTY COALITION MANY NATO-RELATED SUBJECTS WERE CONTROVERSIAL (F-104 REPLACEMENT, NEW MISSILES, ETC.), SO STAMP QUESTION HAD LOW PRIORITY. QUESTION WAS DORMANT UNTIL SECOND CHAMBER PARLIMENTARIAN REPRESENTING TINY RIGHT-WING PARTY MADE COMPARISON OF OLD LIST OF STAMPS PROJECTED BY MINISTRY AND NEW LIST OF PROPOSED ISSUES. NOTING THAT NATO STAMP HAD BEEN REMOVED FROM SCHEDULE, HE POSED PARLIMENTARY QUESTION. STATE SECRETARY'S RESPONSE, ACCURATELY REPORTED IN AP DISPATCH, RAN IN DUTCH PRESS, PRESUMED SOURCE FOR AP STORY.  
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